

What is claimed is:

[Claim 1] A dental tool for use in determining an amount of material removed from a face of a tooth between two immediately adjacent teeth, the dental tool comprising:

a base member having a substantially planar surface; and

a projection extending from the planar surface a distance adapted to be equal to the amount of tooth material to be removed from the face of the tooth,

wherein the projection is adapted to be positioned adjacent any portion of the face of the tooth and the planar surface is sized such that the planar surface is over the two immediately adjacent teeth at all relative positions of the projection and the tooth.

[Claim 2] A dental tool as recited in claim 1, wherein the distance is less than about 2 millimeters.

[Claim 3] A dental tool as recited in claim 1, further comprising a handle member integral with the base member.

[Claim 4] A dental tool as recited in claim 1, further comprising a handle member and means for connecting the handle member to the base member so that the base member is movable relative to the handle member.

[Claim 5] A dental tool as recited in claim 4, wherein the connecting means is a universal joint.

[Claim 6] A dental tool as recited in claim 1, further comprising a handle member and means for removably connecting the handle member to the base member.

[Claim 7] A dental tool as recited in claim 1, wherein the base member and the projection comprise a marking instrument.

[Claim 8] A method for determining an amount of material removed from a face of the tooth between two immediately adjacent teeth, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a dental tool comprising a base member having a substantially planar surface, and a projection extending from the planar surface a distance adapted to be equal to the amount of tooth material to be removed from the face of the tooth;

placing the dental tool against the tooth so that the projection is adjacent the face of the tooth and the planar surface is over the two immediately adjacent teeth; and

moving the dental tool relative to the teeth so that the projection engages all portions of the surface of the tooth to be removed and the planar surface is over the two immediately adjacent teeth at all relative positions of the projection and the tooth.

[Claim 9] A method for determining an amount of material removed from a face of the tooth as recited in claim 8, further comprising the step of placing carbon between the projection and the face of the tooth.